URBAN RUNOFF ACTION TEAM PROGRESS REPORT

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Environmental Problem: Urban runoff is the third leading cause of stream impairment in Region 3, just behind agriculture and resource extraction, with over 4400 miles of streams impaired. Nationally, urban runoff is identified as a leading cause of stream impairment, with every state affected and almost 35,000 miles impaired. With growth and development, this issue will only become more important in the future. More cost effective and sustainable techniques of dealing with urban runoff are needed. In particular, preventative approaches (e.g. low impact development) are needed so that future growth does not cause additional water quality impairments.

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Operators (MS4s) are required under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) regulations to develop and implement storm water management plans that protect water quality and, where applicable, meet Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Waste Load Allocation (WLA) requirements for discharges to impaired streams. This project is intended to help MS4s develop, select and implement a storm water management plan that effectively addresses TMDL requirements and achieves water quality improvement.

Technology Challenges: Many small MS4s have questions concerning how to best achieve their NPDES requirements to develop and implement storm water management plans that protect water quality. The "real world" performance of many commonly used BMPs is not known. This project will attempt to answer some of those questions by performing the following three study phases:

(1)conduct a national assessment of well performing municipal storm water management Best Management Practice (BMP) programs in impaired urban watersheds.

(2) select one of the case study sites and conduct a field pilot project to enhance existing BMPs to improve water quality.

(3)Show environmental results by conducting in stream water quality monitoring and conduct outreach to Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Operators (MS4s) and States about performance.

FY'06 Accomplishments:

- Under a Cooperative Agreement with EPA Region 3, the Center for Watershed Protection began work on the project
- Accotink Creek (City of Fairfax, VA) was selected as the site of the project
- Baseline (pre-restoration) monitoring of Accotink Creek conducted Nov-Dec, 2005 & March, 2006
- Streambank restoration of 1800 ft. stream reach started end of March and completed in June, 2006
- Reconnaissance survey of creek and watershed performed in March, 2006 to better characterize the watershed and to identify potential areas for restoration opportunities (e.g. stormwater retrofits, pollution source controls, riparian management, etc)
- Interim report produced by the Center for Watershed Protection on "Existing Watershed Conditions". Report also identifies potential retrofit sites. Retrofit cost estimates produced for the priority sites.
- Profiles of two superior stormwater programs (Santa Monica, CA. & Austin, Tx) completed. A third Profile of the Baltimore City program will be completed by the end of September, 2006.

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FY'07 Objectives:

The Center for Watershed Protection will complete the remaining three Profiles of superior stormwater programs. They will also recommend and prioritize specific retrofit projects, upland source controls and education targets. A final report will be produced by the Center by the end of the calendar year.

EPA Region 3 will collaborate with the City of Fairfax and the Center for Watershed Protection on how to most effectively implement the restoration recommendations with the limited resources available.

Issues:

The most pressing issue is identifying and securing funding to implement the restoration recommendations. EPA Region 3 will work with the City and State to try to address the issue.